

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GINGREY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WELDON of Florida addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the 5-minute Special Order for the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is vacated.

There was no objection.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

COMBATING METHAMPHETAMINES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity always to come to this floor of Congress and have an opportunity to address the Chair and also the people in this Chamber here on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. and all across America.

A lot of important issues come in front of us here in this Congress, and one of the hardest things that we have to deal with is the priorities always change day to day. We keep this big stack of issues, and we continually pull one issue off that has drifted down below the stack away and put it back up on top, pulling those issues out, putting them on top, trying to get them

moved so that we can get them off the table, send them to the Senate, and take up the next most important issue. It is a constant process here of hundreds, in fact thousands, of issues being reprioritized.

But what we do also is keep sitting at the top those most important issues, those that are critical, those that are urgent. Sometimes we have that difficulty of taking up the issues that are urgent at the expense of those that are important, Mr. Speaker. But we have an issue before this Congress that I believe will come to this floor for a vote sometime this week or at the latest we could come back and take it up early in the first week in December, and that is the issue of methamphetamines.

I represent a district in roughly the western third of Iowa, and we have found ourselves in a situation where we have perhaps as much experience, and I will say sad and bad experience, with methamphetamines as any place in the country.

Some of the reasons for that are that the precursors for methamphetamine, and that means the components that are required in order to produce it in a meth lab, are and have been readily available in Iowa, and particularly in the Corn Belt. One of those components is hydrous ammonia, and because it is available essentially everywhere in the Corn Belt, it has been relatively easy for a meth cook to go in and to steal a tank of hydrous ammonia, take that back to their meth lab and use that to produce methamphetamines.

We did not think we really needed to have a security policy and post guards around the hydrous ammonia tanks because, after all, when you crack one of those nozzles, you get a lesson that you will never forget. Yet, these meth cooks are so intent on producing methamphetamines that that kind of a danger has not been a deterrent to them, and they have some experience with hydrous ammonia also, being from the region, and so they are more comfortable using it and handling it.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is a precursor to methamphetamines that is significantly different in that regard and still has been, up until now, readily available on the shelves of most of the stores in America, and that is a component that we are comfortable with that we know called ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, and then there is a PPA, another precursor that is used in some of this. But I brought some of this along tonight so that I can speak about it, Mr. Speaker. So when we have a cold and we have congestion, we will go down to the store and we will purchase pseudoephedrines of some kind.

Here is one example here, and I have another example here. Most people are familiar with that. The active ingredient is pseudoephedrine, and that pseudoephedrine is what the meth cooks are after.

Now, I would point out that about 10 years ago, we recognized this and began to address it legislatively. One of

the things we did in Iowa was realize that the people who were making methamphetamine then, and it was fairly early in our experience with methamphetamines, they would go to the drugstore or the grocery store and buy themselves a big pill bottle; and that big pill bottle might have pills in there, mostly it was pills that were 30 milligrams each. They would buy several bottles of those dry pills, those starch-based pills, bring the bottles back to the labs, take the caps off of the big bottles, dump them all into their overall vat, and produce their methamphetamines out of those. No restrictions, easily available, go buy it off the shelf. Nobody asked any questions. After all, it was entirely legal; and up until the time they figured out how to use this, there was no negative to people having pseudoephedrine or ephedrine products in their own medicine cabinet, so there was no restriction.

Once we figured out that that is what they were doing, they were using the pseudoephedrine product in order to produce methamphetamine, in Iowa we decided we are going to fix this. We know how to outsmart these people. Since they buy these big bottles and there are 100 or more in a bottle, sometimes 500 in a bottle, we will just limit the size of the container, the numbers of pills that can be sold in a container.

So in Iowa we said, you cannot have 100 or more of these pills that contain pseudoephedrine, ephedrine, or the PPAs. Well, we thought that would solve the problem. I did not get that involved in the language; I supported it; others worked on it. It seemed to me like it was a step in the right direction. Perhaps it was. It was a step in the right direction for just a little while.

Congress understood that there was a problem too, and they concluded here in about 1995 that, you know, it is just too easy to go into the store and buy a bottle of pills that have pseudoephedrine in them and, like we thought in Iowa, take them back to the meth lab, take the cap off, dump it in their batch and cook an ounce of meth. So Congress did not address it the way we did in the Iowa legislature.

Iowa said less than 100 per container, and Congress said, well, no, no meth cook is going to go to all that work if we just require that these pills go in blister packs. So if you have noticed, for the last 10 years when you go to buy your pseudoephedrine, you will find that it is in blister packs. So you have to take it out and tear one open. I have one in my pocket because of the condition I have been in, Mr. Speaker. There is a pair, that is 30 milligrams per pill, 60 milligrams in there, and you have to tear a little corner off, tear the tin foil off the bottom, push those out of there. It is kind of hard, but you can get them out if you are sick and take your pseudoephedrine in that kind of way, because Congress said, we will put these in these blister packs so that it is too hard for the meth cooks to open up